

**CITY OF TUKWILA
OFFICE OF HUMAN SERVICES
SERVICE REPORT**

Date Submitted: July 13, 2011

Agency Name: **Dynamic Family Services**
Program Name: **Early Intervention**
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Month: Jan Feb Mar **Apr May Jun** Jul Aug Sept Oct Nov Dec
(Please circle)

Have you met the above performance measure goals? **Performance measurements have been met this quarter for all three cities.**

Narrative:

Auburn: A parent's holiday story

When I was a kid I remember a few occasional BBQ's on the 4th at my Aunts and Uncles with some fireworks, it was safe, sane and fun. When I grew up, got married but didnt have kids yet, \$\$\$ would be spent by friends and family on things that went up and blew up, not really an idea of a good time for kids but as very young adults it was fun. So with these fond memories we set out to make sure the 4th of July for our family was fun and we honor the holiday as a family in our own way. With our SPD kiddos that means for now quietly! Some children (and people of all ages) with Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD) are unable to be around loud noises. In some cases it isn't even a noise as loud as a firework. My oldest son Wyatt is very sensitive to noises like fans, vacuums, and alarms. In Wyatts case most of the time its from sounds that he can not *SEE* a reason or the source of them. So a fan in a ceiling of a public restroom or a loud unusual car or motorcycle, especially alarms send him into a panic. So the fireworks while we have been preparing them for the holiday are just another loud noise. Wyatt's learning coping techniques which is helping a lot so I am really happy with the progress he is making. But not to push our luck we planned a fun family 4th at home.

No fireworks in this house (maybe someday who knows) so Wyatt went with Dad to pick out some glow sticks earlier today. You can usually find them at the dollar store which makes it an even better deal. A lot of fun bright colors and a little imagination make for a fun show! I used my digital camera to capture the moments, and we soon realized that in the photos they looked even like fireworks! Everyone enjoyed looking at the pictures later on as well. The kids played for hours in the hall, bathroom and darkened bedrooms with the glow sticks. Took a break for a barbecue dinner and were back at it again before bed. We are definitely going to keep this in our bag of tricks and use it for New Years Eve as well. Keeping the kids involved in the holidays is so nice, instead of shutting up the house and forgetting about it because of the loud noise!

Kristen
Wyatt 4, Nash 2

Covington: A mother's story

Nathan and Nicholas Hernandez were premature, they were born at 31 weeks. When Nathan was five months old Children's Hospital did a swallowing test and they recommended therapies for him. A month later the University of Washington recommended therapies for Nicholas because he was looking like a 4 month old and he was 6 months. They sent me to the SKIP program. With Nathan I used to go to the therapy center but with the SKIP program they give me the opportunity to have home therapies. It's been so much better to have them come to my house. The boys have made big improvements, they have started rolling, and sitting by themselves. Nathan did not know how to eat and now Nathan and Nicholas are eating everything. They have

started crawling and trying to stand up by themselves. I give thanks to SKIP and the therapist for all the help they have given my children.

Renton: A therapists story of a family's involvement in therapy

I see a little girl that has just turned one with a diagnosis of Down Syndrome. Initially when I went out to evaluate this child, the family had no goals for her and did not know what could be done to help her motor development. She is now crawling for a few feet with help, rolling without help and sitting up for several seconds without help. Both of her parents make it a priority to be there for our appointments and her dad readily gets down on the floor and participates. Her parents now have lots of goals for her and every week have a new task they want to work on until my next visit. It has been a pleasure to see these parents become very involved with their child and take such pride in all her accomplishments.

Seatac: What a mother has learned on this journey with a special needs child

My son was born severely premature at 24 weeks, tipping the scales at 1 pound 14 ounces.

After all was said and done, my son spent 7 ½ months in the NICU, the first 5 at Swedish, and the last 2 1/2 at Children's Hospital, before he ever came home for the first time.

As we were going through this, I never thought my child would survive. The doctors were warning us about the quality of life he may lead and decisions we may have to make. They told us about all the different complications that may rise, and what we can expect. Even after all of these talks, I was still in shell shock. I had never heard about prematurity before, much less babies surviving being born early. Learning that my baby might only live for a couple of hours, or may have severe medical complications was devastating. I didn't know how a baby could survive that, and from what the doctors said, if he did survive, he may not even really "be there" mentally, or his medical problems may outweigh the benefit of life.

I had a special needs child. Those words special needs really opened my eyes. There is such a wide spectrum of special needs. This kind of thing is not supposed to happen, why could something like this happen to someone so small and helpless?

I learned that this was more of a roller coaster than anything because one day you would feel like you were on top of the world, probably due to some sort of progress, and the next day, you are looking at the steep cliff you have to climb, and it's alright to feel bad about it.

We began early intervention, mostly through physical/occupational therapy because he has severe developmental delays. Early intervention helped me in a number of ways. I learned to be able to relate to my child through our physical/occupational therapist. I had no idea what to do with him, or how to deal with him aside from medical stuff. The early intervention team has always been very helpful, making sure we are taking the best possible care of his delays, and making sure I have the support I need as a parent with a disabled child. Having the early intervention team really taught me what to expect on this journey, and what was normal for my son. It was priceless to have that perspective, because his normal is different than a healthy child's. It didn't lower my expectations for my son; it just helped me put them in the right order, and in the right light. I learned that his disability was grueling and frustrating beyond words, but that my son was still a child. Many things were still the same, he loves to play, loves me to sing to him, loves stories and funny faces, bath time was his favorite time of day, and he fought sleep just like every other kid out there.

What I learned about myself through having a child with a disability is that I can handle more than I ever thought I could, and that the words special needs don't mean what I thought they did. The biggest thing I have learned through this is to look for the little things, because big things don't happen often, and to find humor in nearly everything, because otherwise you don't laugh much. Our physical/occupational therapist brought that perspective to me, and without that, I wouldn't have gotten where we are now. I don't think I would have found that perspective on my own either. Even though we are past a lot of the medical complications, my son remains disabled. At two, he can only crawl, and still doesn't eat a lot of solid foods.

Corri, mother

Tukwila: How equipment has helped a child discover the world

Isabella is 2 year old girl with a very complex medical history and is often in the hospital for extended periods of time. She has a very difficult time moving her body and needs help to hold her head and body up for sitting, she is functionally blind, is fed through a J-tube, and requires full-time assistance by her family and in-home nurse. She has been part of the SKIP program for a year and receives visits from a physical therapist and speech therapist in addition to vision therapy provided through the school district.

One of our early projects was to get some equipment for Isabella to help her stand up. Her stander is a piece of adaptive equipment that helps her stand up on her own with various supports since Isabella herself is now able to push a very little bit with her legs. The stander arrived and after a lot of work to help Isabella tolerate any pressure on her feet and getting her some supportive orthotics, Isabella became a stander lover. She starts smiling and making happy sounds when her mom puts on Isabella's orthotics and shoes since she knows it's about time to get in her stander. Her family moves the stander near their large TV so she can at least watch the colors of her Baby Einstein video and play along with her toy piano placed on the tray of the stander. Her family enthusiastically agrees that this is Isabella's favorite time of the day and will happily spend an hour or more here working on strengthening her body and exploring her toys. She can hold her head up on her own for longer periods of time and she is starting to show toy preferences after her time upright and playing with them in her stander. It is such a fun time for her that now her family takes it with them to the hospital (since Isabella is often there for several days in a row for something as "simple" as a cold) and will push her up and down the halls while she is standing in her stander. Being upright and independent has opened up a world of new experiences for Isabella and it is such a joy to watch her discover them!